



Visioning for Prevention

Protecting Children Through
Strengthening Families



Capacity Building
CENTER FOR STATES

Vision Tracking Matrix

The Vision Tracking Matrix helps child welfare leaders identify what they can do to advance their prevention vision and shows what they will see as that vision takes root. Child welfare agency leaders can use this matrix to support stronger collaboration and improve the coordination of resources across a group of partners focused on prevention, also known as a prevention network.

The process steps and scale within the matrix are a way for leaders to appreciate progress and see how they can move forward in visioning for prevention. The top row of the matrix illustrates a scale that shows the progression of a vision from when it is initially established to it being more widely embraced to it finally being embodied across the system in values, language, policies, and behaviors. This scale was designed to help a leader build on existing strengths and see what more can be achieved. The items listed in the left column represent key process steps in changing culture toward a prevention-oriented system, which help leaders move from the vision being “just an idea” to making it a reality. In each box of the matrix, milestones are provided to demonstrate the progression of a shifting culture where the vision for prevention eventually takes root. The milestones can be checked off as leaders see them take place, and/or they can be reviewed regularly to identify what can be done next to advance the vision.

Developing and implementing a prevention system that protects children through strengthening families require an enormous culture shift in child welfare. This tool helps leaders observe the milestones that accompany such a culture shift and includes ideas for sustaining momentum; it is meant to be revisited over time, as it can be many years before culture shifts take root. While demonstrating patience as the vision for prevention unfolds, leaders play a key role in conveying a sense of urgency for moving prevention efforts forward.

Establishing	Embracing	Embodying
Communicate About the Desired Change		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership has a clear “business case” for prevention to support needed resources. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership and staff can articulate the value of prevention in an “elevator speech.” <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership at all levels prioritizes prevention and show clear support for the shift in practice. <input type="checkbox"/> Individuals inside and outside the agency affected by the desired change are brought together to learn about the change toward prevention. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership frequently and consistently promotes messaging about strengthening families. <input type="checkbox"/> Partners are clear about the change toward prevention and why it is important. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Internal staff regularly discuss how the change impacts their role in strengthening families. <input type="checkbox"/> Internal staff can talk about the change toward prevention and why it is important. <input type="checkbox"/> Partners can express their role in strengthening families. <input type="checkbox"/> Partners can talk about the change and why it is important. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Partners understand others’ roles and how they work together. <input type="checkbox"/> Partners adopt a customer service approach that reflects the values of partnering to strengthen families and prevent child maltreatment from occurring. <input type="checkbox"/> Partners speak the same language about the change. <input type="checkbox"/> Businesses and organizations in the community share ideas and resources.
Form a Team		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership recognizes how different agency partners and stakeholders add value to advancing prevention efforts. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership intentionally recruits traditional and nontraditional team members for the task of supporting families. <input type="checkbox"/> A wide range of stakeholders, persons with lived experience, and agency staff come together as a team. <input type="checkbox"/> A core group of champions has authority and responsibility for the effort. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership encourages creative solutions through open and honest discussions about challenges and impacts on the work. <input type="checkbox"/> Members of the team collaborate to define roles, responsibilities, and expectations across the prevention network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Partners find value in the shift toward prevention and have created their own internal teams. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership continues to include and engage persons with lived expertise. <input type="checkbox"/> Members of the team transparently discuss what has worked and not worked in the past and where the gaps have been. <input type="checkbox"/> Members of the team see each other as thought partners who regularly provide input into prevention-related decisions. <input type="checkbox"/> Team members examine participation regularly to ensure voices at all levels of agency, partners, youth, family, and community partners are represented. <input type="checkbox"/> Team members assess team makeup to ensure racial, ethnic, and other diversity characteristics reflect the community. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership adopts teaming structures and conducts meetings in nontraditional ways to better reach, communicate, and include under-represented voices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Every organization impacted by the prevention shift is represented in a larger team. <input type="checkbox"/> A core group of champions establishes a plan for inevitable leadership changes that explains how new leaders will be brought in as prevention champions. <input type="checkbox"/> Partners dedicate time to the team and prioritize the effort regularly. <input type="checkbox"/> The larger team has diverse representation and is inclusive of family and youth to be served, exhibiting the continued engagement and inclusion of persons with lived expertise from start to finish. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership shares power with members of the larger team. <input type="checkbox"/> Members of the larger team have a shared responsibility to hold each other accountable for decision-making. <input type="checkbox"/> Members of the larger team continue to attend meetings, and individuals volunteer for tasks.

Establishing	Embracing	Embodying
Create the Vision		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership, agency staff at all levels, youth, and families begin with a clean canvas and co-create a vision through a collaborative process. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership ensures the visioning conversation does not take place without the input and presence of youth and families. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership solicits the community narrative as part of developing the content of the vision. <input type="checkbox"/> Members of the team listen and reflect on the community narrative to inform the content of the vision. <input type="checkbox"/> Members of the team develop a compelling vision that conveys the “why.” <input type="checkbox"/> Members of the team reach consensus and feel that their input is reflected in the vision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Partners develop their own vision that uses shared language and values to describe their prevention approach to child welfare. <input type="checkbox"/> Agency training and communications embrace and reflect the vision in their materials. <input type="checkbox"/> Agency staff train and supervise to the values and vision. <input type="checkbox"/> Persons with lived experience help to broadcast the vision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The larger team co-creates an integrated vision that includes the child welfare agency's and partners' visions and demonstrates shared responsibility for supporting families and keeping children safe. <input type="checkbox"/> The larger team builds a partnership for strategy and governance that holds firm outside of leadership changes. <input type="checkbox"/> Agency and partner policies and practices reflect the vision, and all are held accountable based on the shared vision and goals. <input type="checkbox"/> Staff and partners share the vision with others consistently and in their own words.
Launch the Path Forward		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership conducts an organizational assessment of the current state as it relates to the vision. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership conducts a comprehensive assessment of capacity, readiness, and needs. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership and partner leadership develop individual implementation plans. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership ensures the agency website and documents are updated to reflect the vision. <input type="checkbox"/> Members of the team identify the audience and develop messaging to reflect the vision and implementation plan. <input type="checkbox"/> Members of the team promote the message in lobbies, offices, and partner locations so the community can see the mission, vision, and values. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Members of the larger team define how their implementation plans fit into the goal of strengthening families to prevent child abuse and neglect. <input type="checkbox"/> Child welfare agency and partners create metrics for tracking progress and measuring outcomes of their implementation plans. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership ensures the communication and messaging reflect the implementation strategy and vice versa. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership establishes multiple and ongoing avenues to hear from stakeholders and those this work directly affects. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership adjusts along the way as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Members of the larger team support and help develop a comprehensive implementation plan that encompasses the child welfare agency's and partners' implementation plan. <input type="checkbox"/> Members of the larger team meet regularly as a steering committee and create a community plan for how agencies will work together to strengthen children and families. <input type="checkbox"/> Members of the steering committee consider how changes within an agency or organization will impact the whole system's plan. <input type="checkbox"/> Members of the steering committee adjust the implementation plan based on collected data. <input type="checkbox"/> Partners share resources (funding, staff, etc.).

Establishing	Embracing	Embodying
Ensure the Vision Takes Root		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership ensures that all child welfare policy and fiscal decisions and priorities reflect the vision. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership makes certain there are active continuous quality improvement mechanisms in place. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership influences changes to human resources' processes to reflect the vision for prevention in hiring and competencies of staff, training systems, and data systems. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership embeds the vision in the child welfare agency practice model and related policies. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership makes sure agency training reflects and reinforces the vision and the values. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership and partners acknowledge the uncomfortable and past challenges and make it clear that a new way of doing business is being established. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Partners ensure their policy and fiscal decisions are clear and reflective of the vision. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership acknowledges and addresses the vision as a regular topic of conversation with leaders across systems. <input type="checkbox"/> Agency staff and partners view the vision as a standard of practice. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership promotes and expects collaboration with other child-serving agencies and community organizations to provide services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Steering committee members observe the vision withstanding the test of administration and leadership changes, current trends, and competing priorities. <input type="checkbox"/> Families and members of the community can see the vision of prevention reflected in child welfare practice. <input type="checkbox"/> Agency staff exhibit humility and courage to learn from and improve upon the vision and implementation plan. <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership approves and allocates funding for prevention services that is flexible and blended. <input type="checkbox"/> Steering committee members share outcomes across sectors and make changes based on those results.

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